Montgomery County Universal Preschool Implementation Work Group
November 13, 2008
6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Council Office Building, 2nd Floor Cafeteria
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

MINUTES

Members present:
Kate Garvey
Janine Bacquie
Jane Seffel
Julie Bader
Brad Stewart
Traci McLemore
Anne McLeer for Jackie Lichter
Rolf Grafwallner
Clara Floyd
Khadra Ayorinde
Jackie Lichter
John Surr for Lindsey Allard

Members not present:
Jose Alvarez
Gene Counihan
Jennifer Devine
Mary Lang

The meeting was began at 6:10 p.m. and began by the introduction of members and guests. Following the introduction, Councilmember Valerie Ervin addressed the group. She thanked the group for their commitment to the needs of young children in the County and encouraged them to consider recommending funding for full day pre-kindergarten. She informed the group that after discussing the needs of pre-kindergarten at a Kennedy Cluster meeting, representatives from the County Executive, the MCPS School Board, the MCPS School Superintendent as well as state and federal officials are supportive of full day pre-kindergarten services. Although funding such a program may be challenging, this is the right political climate to push the initiative forward and make the compelling argument as to why full day pre-kindergarten should be the favored option promoted and funded.

Debbie Enright from the Maryland State Family Child Care Association and Donna Fowler, the Director of Public Policy of the MSFCCA presented information on how family child care providers will be included as part of the State's Preschool for All plan.

The family child care hub is a network of providers who come together to offer preschool and other resources to the children in their care. Typically, the network consists of approximately 15 providers and one to three centers. The network is linked by a fiscal agent who is either a nonprofit organization or a center. The fiscal agent will hire a certified teacher, manage the hub and provide a substitute that is available to all providers in the hub. The providers train together and are able to pool resources to share costs and provide the best quality care to their children.

The curriculum proposed for family child care is aligned with the Maryland Model for School Readiness. The program is in its infancy and will be start as a pilot program. Ms. Donna Fowler will provide the group with examples of existing family child care network hubs that currently exist around the country.

Outstanding issues that will need to be resolved in the pilot program are:
- the 0-3 year old business plan needs to compliment the universal preschool business program.
- Who decides where the networks form?
- How can informal providers move through the process to be able to participate in Preschool for All.

The group received a debriefing about the parent meeting at CentroNia.

Discussion of the Phase 1 Report:

The Group provide the following recommendations:
Funding Priorities related to training:
- There should be buy in from community colleges for students to participate din two-year degree programs that are easily transferable to 4 year degree programs.
- Provide training vouchers
- Increase career and professional development funds
- Allow an alternative certification process
- Utilize existing scholarships for teachers
- Examine data from the Maryland Higher Education Commission regarding the number of graduates with Early Childhood Education degrees.
- Provide online classes
- Address the capacity issues to fully diagnosis whether the current facilities can accommodate the teaching demand in the state.
- Is the intention to train early childhood educator to leave the field- balance the incentives to pursue higher education with the possibilities losing a large percentage of graduates after a few years.
- Allow student teaching in child care centers.
- Focus on 3 aspects (priorities):
  1. Degree seeking teachers
  2. Those teachers/providers who are credentialed
  3. Special priority on family childcare/informal care

- Funding for the most at risk children who receive care from primarily informal care
- Focus on serving the children who are the neediest.
- Bring the qualified teacher to the children; provide a financial incentive to the qualified teacher (loan forgiveness)
- Focus on providers who are serving the "high needs" children.
- Increase local funding serving community providers who served children with special needs
- Courses provided to providers should be compatible with higher education institutions. Help with moving providers through the ladder.
- Mirror course requirements in training organization with the course description of the higher education institution
- Examine grants, foundation funding, and endowments as additional resources.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.